

The Native Hawaiian Plant Society

Nanea Pua o ka Aina Aloha

Annual Newsletter February 2006

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Lee Altenberg to speak at At Feb. 17
Annual Business Meeting

Wailea 670's Forgotten Dryland Forest: Must It Be Destroyed?
President Lee Altenberg will speak at our annual business meeting, which will take place at our usual location, the poolside meeting room at the Tavares Community Center in Pukalani, at 7PM, Feb. 17. The 10000 year old a`a lava flow in the southern 1/4 of the Wailea 670 property is a remnant dryland forest hosting at least 12 endemic and 7 indigenous plant species, wiliwilis hundreds of years old, candidate endangered awikwiki, and a unique form of *Lipochaeta rockii* found nowhere else. It is slated to become golf course and multi-family subdivisions. This talk will survey the habitat and the current status of its fate.

Before Lee speaks, we'll have a short business meeting to elect our Board. See you there.

President's message

When long-time NHPS President Linda Nelson knew she was headed to the Big Island, the Board needed to recruit a new President, and I was honored to be nominated to this office. The NHPS Board works very collaboratively, but with the president's role comes additional duties and opportunities for leadership.

The Society over the decades of its tenure has evolved into five principal activities: the restoration project at Kanaha Pond; maintaining a system of exclosures across Maui that protect some of the rarest plants in the world; maintaining a small number of urban native plantings; participating in public events such as Earth Day and Arbor Day; hosting public lectures on native Hawaiian plant topics.

Should the Society be doing more? Can it do more? The answer, of course, is "yes". The amount of human attention and resources that native plants have received is far less than what is necessary to safeguard their future and restore their habitats. So, how can the Society grow to help fill in this attention gap?

The Society at present is an all-volunteer organization with a budget the size of some of the endangered species populations we are protecting. As volunteers, we must draw our contributions to the Society from our discretionary time, which in Maui's economy can be squeezed. But many hands make light work. So the primary asset of the Society is social --- the ability to connect people with people, people with ideas, and people with plants, in ways that meet their unmet---or even unknown, or unimagined---needs. I believe that the key to the Society's development is to cultivate its social activities.

What unmet needs are there in the community regarding native plants, and who would have an interest in seeing those needs be met? There are innumerable opportunities, but discovering them requires those fortuitous encounters that occur only in gatherings. My own involvement with native Hawaiian plants began in such a way: I attended a lecture by Rene Sylva at the Bailey House in 1996, and met a film maker who was completing a documentary on Auwahi, who introduced me to Anna Palomino and the East Maui `ohai.

Lively discussion and new connections often emerge during the public lectures sponsored by the Society. But these have been too spread-out for continuity of such connections to develop. To find new events and venues for regular face-to-face meetings is strategy I wish to explore with the Board. The key, however, is that as events, they meet the needs of our membership and the community. A monthly luncheon with native plant talk story, perhaps? We enjoy hearing what others are doing with native plants;

we enjoy sharing what we are doing; we enjoy discovering new places to go, new issues arising, new scientific discoveries.

So I would put out a call to the membership to think of ways that we can gather together that will be of immediate and mutual benefit in addition to fostering those fortuitous meetings and ideas that will provide the soil for the development of the Native Hawaiian Plant Society. Bring these ideas to the Board meetings or mail, call, or e-mail them in. What does it take to make a thousand flowers bloom? The timely convergence of seed, soil, rain, and sun. Let us then create such timely convergences.

Memberships: It's renewal time again! Unless your label says "2006", please renew! Please take particular care to print your email address plainly.

NHPS Project Reports

Ma'o Hau Hele Exclosure – Hank Oppenheimer, Project Leader

This is NHPS' first exclosure, and it contains one of the last wild populations of the State Flower, ma'o hau hele, *Hibiscus breckenridgei*.

2005 saw plenty of rain, and the exclosure has thrived as a result. There were no fires that threatened the exclosure this year, and it appears that ungulate pressure on the fence has lessened, for the time being. We anxiously await the new growth of the surrounding wiliwili trees to see if they are negatively impacted by the *Erythrina* Gall Wasp. Inside the fence, all the native species are healthy, and regenerating. The amount of *koa haole* and guinea grass continues to decline with our ongoing efforts. A stubborn patch of tilaroo (*Neonotonia wightii*) still exists nearby.

We have service trips planned for this January and February, so come join us for a fun & rewarding day. Call Hank at 669.4983 for details. Mahalo Nui Loa to Donna & Alan Ting & Family; the King Kamehameha Golf Course; and all our hardworking volunteers for the outstanding help & support.

Kanaha Pond – Lorna Hazen, Project Leader

Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the kiawe clearing along the beach road at Kanaha Pond Wildlife Sanctuary Saturday and Sunday morning, Oct. 22 and 23. If you look to the right as you pass the "Cash & Carry", you can now actually see the pond from the road! Thanks to Fern Duvall (DLNR), who recruited the sawyers, Kerry Fay, Scott Fisher, Jeremy Gooding, David Quisenberry, Terry Quisenberry, Jordon Jotiel, Jay Penniman, Francis Quitazol and Bryon Stevens. Also many many thanks to Carl Martin for chipping the multitudinous scrap branches which were dragged to the chipper by King Kekaulike students Kristina Semanyuk, Sona Nahopetyan, David Zoleski, Christina Kohley and faculty member Pamela Jayne, their Eco-Action advisor. Thanks to Sierra Club member Lucienne de Naie and, of course, to NHPS members Martha Martin, Irene Newhouse, Chris Alexander (DLNR), Becky Lau, Cynthia Quisenberry, and Lorna Hazen, who spent 4 hours hauling branches to the chipper. We were blessed by several cooling, passing showers and believe it or not, had fun. Jay Magaleanes, Jenna Kalalau (Americorps), Martha, Chris, Becky, Lorna & Carl finished hauling & chipping the remaining branches for 3-1/2 hours the following Thursday. Thank you to Carol Gentz and Anna Mae Shishido who helped Carl, Martha, and Lorna spread the mountains of chips using garbage cans on Sat. Nov. 12. We will soon be outplanting some native beach species on the resulting mulched areas on a Thursday during the rainy season. Mahalo everyone! A project well done.

Habitat restoration is ongoing every Thursday. We are currently clearing the "Middle Road" of alien plants. As a result, 'akulekule, pa'u'ohi'l'aka, ahuawa and alena are getting a chance to spread. Groups are welcome to participate on weekdays or weekends. For a free workout, come join us every Thursday from 7:30 to 11:30AM. One hour or three. Two refreshment breaks are included. All levels of endurance welcome. [Call Lorna at 572-6338](tel:572-6338)

La Perouse Exclosures – Richard Nakagawa, Project Leader

NHPS managed one trip out to the exclosure last year. It was Linda Nelson's last service trip prior to leaving Maui. We did the usual weeding but also took in the beauty of the area. The awikiwiki and hao were flowering within the exclosure.

Auwahi Exclosures – Richard Nakagawa, Project Leader

We managed several trips to Auwahi last year. Many native plants are thriving within the exclosures. In fact, in our largest exclosure, it's getting difficult to walk through because of the many native plants. Despite the native plants, weeds continue to be a problem. We still need to do a lot of work to keep the weeds in check. Maybe different strategies might help.

ALOHA!

We're sad that two board members left us this year. **Linda Nelson**, has moved to the Big Island. Linda was with NHPS through its initial founding by Rene Sylva in support of the Botanical Garden, its change of focus when the Garden closed, and took over from President Lisa Schattenberg-Raymond when Lisa's efforts to reopen the garden as Maui Nui Botanical Garden took off.

Tamara Sherrill, board member & horticulturist at the Maui Nui Botanical Gardens has moved to Oahu to pursue studies in either botany or natural resources & environmental management at UH/Manoa. Before joining Maui Nui Botanical Gardens, Tamara took care of the native plantings along the Sea Walk in Wailea.

We wish Linda & Tamara the best in this new phase of their lives.

Mahalo to:

Cook Kwee's Maui Cookies for donating cookies for our meetings.

Maui County Parks & Recreation for use of the Tavares Community Center

Hawaiian Canoe Club for the used of their meeting room for Board meetings

Carl Martin for lending his chipper to the Kanaha Pond cleanup.

Eda Kinnear for maintaing the native plant garden at the Kahului Library courtyard

All our generous donors, especially: **Raymond Higashi, Geary Mizuno, John Plews, & Martha Vockrodt-Moran**

Our exclosure partners

Hawaii State DLNR

Kamehameha Golf course

Donna & Alan Ting

Ulupalakua Ranch

Our public meeting speakers

Mach Fukada who spoke on alien insects & their hazard to native plants

Art Medeiros who updated us on the wiliwili gall wasp infestation

Current board members

Lee Altenberg
Muffie Davis
Lorna Hazen
Becky Lau
Irene Newhouse
Hank Oppenheimer
Anna Palomino
Tricia Scott

Board of Directors Election

We're extremely pleased that with this year's election on Feb. 17, we'll be able to have 13 board members, the maximum permitted by our bylaws. The candidates for openings are: Colin McCormick, Jeremy Spencer, Bob Hobdy, Stephanie Seidman, & Elizabeth Speith.

Native Plants in the Landscape Tour On

February 26, 2005, NHPS will be holding a tour in the Haiku area, featuring native plants in the home landscape. We will begin with a tour of Ho'olawa Farms, the native plant nursery & store of board member & recognized leader in native plant propagation Anna Palomino. We will car

pool to the Romanchuk property, which has many ohia trees and other natives, and to the Thomas property, whose owners have been landscaping with native plants for years. The trip will conclude at the property of board member Muffie Davis, who also gardens with natives, where there will be refreshments and snacks. If you think you'll be hungry by then, bring something additional for lunch. Please sign up in advance by calling Becky Lau at 575-2639.

Participate! In addition to the above special events, and service trips, members are welcome to attend board meetings. They're the first Friday of the month at the Hawaiian Canoe Club Hale in Kahului, and start at 6. Please let us know by email or phone – any of the officers on page 1 – so we can get enough food.

Why don't we ever tell you exactly about service trips? The precise reasons vary, but they all come down to one thing: the project leaders have to know about how many people are going to be coming ahead of time. If we "hold back" information, you have to call us & we get a head count.

Upcoming NHPS events

Clip this box!

February 12 (Sat): Service trip to the *Mao hau hele* exclosure. Call 669-4893 to sign up.

February 17 (Fri): annual business meeting, Tavares Center, Pukalani, 7PM with Lee Altenberg

February 26 (Sun): Native plants in the landscape tour. Call 575-2369 to sign up.

March 11 (Sat): Ohai exclosure service trip. Call 875-3504 or 575-2985 to sign up.

TBA: (check the website): Bob Hobdy will present his unpublished work on Hawaiian malvaceae (joint with MBNG)

April 23 Earth Day at MBNG. NHPS always has a booth. See you there!